Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0435VA-1 for Fairfax County Public Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	6

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS partially met the requirements of this section. FCPS presents a vision of the next steps it has identified as necessary to meet the needs of its students, parents, educators, and other stakeholders. The narrative in this section sufficiently addresses Core Assurance Areas 1 and 2. However, the district did not fully address Core Assurance Areas 3 and 4. For these reasons, this section scored at the high-level of the medium range.

In addressing Core Assurance Area (1) (adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy) FCPS states, "(1) FCPS takes college- and career-readiness seriously for all our students. A rigorous Program of Studies (POS) encompasses curriculum to prepare students for academic success. Well-defined student achievement goals are focused on (1) Pursuing Academic Excellence, (2) Developing Essential Life Skills, and (3) Demonstrating a Responsibility to the Community and World. Our challenge is to personalize learning by pursuing academic excellence with an intentional and deliberate focus on skills education."   Additionally FCPS included in its Assurances Section that it was located in a state that had adopted College and Career Ready Standards.

In Core Assurance Area (2), FCPS describes a robust data, teaching and learning system it intends to build through the funding provided via this grant. These systems will create an interoperable Open Community Action Gateway to provide device-independent, anytime, anywhere opportunities to facilitate personalized learning by engaging education stakeholders and innovators. Students, parents, educators, and leaders will be empowered to pursue optimal strategies, tools, and supports in order to personalize learning and teaching.

However, in Core Assurance Area (3), FCPS did not sufficiently adress recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, stating only, "A wide variety of professional development opportunities nurture great teachers and leaders. Our challenge is to customize professional development grounded in best practices, empower professional learning communities to create job-embedded experiences, provide access to training as well as internal and external resources in an efficient and sustainable manner, allowing educators to utilize innovative teaching and learning material that is being generated in open electronic sources across the nation."

Similarly, the FCPS vision did not address Core Assurance (4) (turning around lowest-achieving <u>schools</u>). Instead in this section FCPS addressed its vision for turn around the performance of their lowest achieving <u>students,</u>

	Available	Score
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS fully described its process used to select schools for inclusion in its proposal, included a list of those schools, and provided the total number of participating students, including the numbers and percentages of those students who are from low income families and high needs students. FCPS also included the number of participating teachers. This section scored at the high level of the high range.

In its K-12 proposal, SCP has identified 76 schools in nine feeder patterns as grant project participants. These schools are organized into 9 feeder patterns (or pyramids) and all students in each of the project schools be served by the grant.   These feeder patterns represent the lowest achieving schools in the district. They are comprised of 9 high schools, 10 middle schools and 57 elementary schools attended by just under 65,000 students, 60% of whom are high-needs based on eligibility for free and reduced price meals (48%, significantly higher than the district average of 28%), limited English proficient students and students with disabilities. Of the 38 Title I schools in the district, 32 will be participants in this project. Similarly, the average percentage of students receiving ESOL services in each FCPS school is 15.0%, while the average percentage for RTT schools is 30.9%. Detailed charts were provided showing the number of students participating at each school, the number of high needs students attending each of the project schools. SCP also included the number of participating educators at each of the project schools.

	Available	Score
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	10

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS fully met all of the requirements of the criteria in this section. This section scored at the high level of the high range.

FCPS provided a high quality plan including key goals, strategies, rationale (assumptions), deliverables, timelines, and the parties responsible for implementing the proposal activities. The phase-in of project goals was well thought out and reasonable, and builds logically to attaining the stated project goals. Project goals throughout the proposal hold all schools in the district to the same performance targets as those of project schools, and the strategies for moving both project and other district schools to the performance targets are described in the plan.

The district identifies as its logic model that, "The essence of our proposal is *personalization of learning*, *customization of professional development, and integration of technology* via a blueprint that analyzes and redesigns **processes**, implements meaningful, **interoperable technology**, and encourages **open community action** to make high-need students successful. Our change theory will comprehensively examine education processes, consolidate the automation of these processes, and enable action by appropriate stakeholders to improve student learning outcomes for high-need students by encouraging open collaboration."

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	7

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS partially met the requirements of this section. FCPS has set ambitious yet achievable annual performance goals in for the LEA overall and for each of the sub-groups required by the criteria for this section in each of the areas required by the criteria in this section. However, the district does meet the criteria calling for annual performance goals in reading as it did not include annual goals in either overall proficiency nor in decreasing achievement gaps for 2012-13 through 2015-16. For these reasons, the section scored at the high-level of the medium range.

In math overall, data is provided for each Race to the Top school and for the district (division total). For project schools the percentage of students meeting proficiency standards as measured by the Virginia Standards of Learning will increase from 57% in 2012-13 to 83% in 2015-16, and to "90% or above" in 2016-17.

While the requirements of this section call for annual performance goals in reading, FCPS did not include annual performance goals for 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16 for individual schools or for the district (division total) results. For 2016-17, FCPS lists the performance goal for each Race to the Top School and the district (division total) at "90% or above." In explanation for the lack of annual performance goals, FCPS states, "*2012-13 is the first year new standards will be assessed. Intermediate goals will be determined based upon 2012-13 results.*"

FCPS set goals for its district overall and in its project schools in closing the achievement gap in mathematics subgroup populations from its baseline measure, which ranged from a 1 percentage points gap for white students to a 39 percentage point gap for students with disabilities, to its final 2016-17 goal of totally closing all achievement gaps.

FCPS set goals for its district overall and in its project schools in closing the achievement gap in reading subgroup populations from its baseline measure, which ranged from a 1 percentage point gap for Asian students to 13% gap for students with disabilities, to its final 2016-7 goals of totally closing all achievement gaps. However, citing the same reasons as those described above in reading overall, no performance goals for 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16 were provided.

The district set performance goals in increasing the high school graduation rate overall and within each subgroup population at each of project high schools, across all project high schools, and for the district (division total), moving from the baseline measure to "80% or higher" for 2016-17, with annual performance goals set for each intervening year.

The district set performance goals in increasing college enrollment overall at each from each of the nine feeder pattern high schools, across all project feeder pattern schools, and for the district (division total), moving from the baseline measure to "80% or higher" for 2016-17, with annual performance goals set for each intervening year.

B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	5

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS did not meet the requirements of subsections (1)(a) and 1(b) of this section. As described in more detail below, the data provided did not sufficiently meet the criteria calling for a the applicant to provide a clear record of success over the past four years in advancing student learning and achievement and increasing equity in learning. The district did not address how it would achieve ambitious and significant reforms in its lowest achieving schools. However the district met the criteria in subsection (c) in making student performance data available to students, educators, and parents. This section was scored at the lower-level of the medium range.

FCPS provided just two line graphs to demonstrate evidence of a clear track record of success in the past four years in advancing student learning and achievement and increasing equity in learning and teaching. In these two line graphs, the reading and math proficiency of one group (consisting of Blacks and Hispanic students aggregated into a single line) is compared to a second group (consisting of White and Asian students aggregated into a single line) over the past 9 years. While the two graphs portray significant closure of achievement gaps between these two aggregated groups of students (in reading the achievement gap between Black/Hispanic students and Asian/While students closed from 27 percentage points in 2002 to 11 percentage points in 2011, representing an average closing rate per year of 1.78 percentage points per year; in math the achievement gap between Black/Hispanic students and Asian/While students closed from 25 percentage points in 2002 to 11 percentage points in 2011, representing an average closing rate per year of 2.56 percentage points per year), these two graphs are not sufficient to demonstrate the "clear record" as required in this criteria. For example, the last year shown on the graph is 2011. There is no explanation why 2012 results were not included since these data are included in the tables in Section (A)(4). No explanation was provided to illustrate why just four groups were aggregated into two groups on the graphs provided, nor why other subgroups were not shown. For example, FCPS did not provide any data showing increasing closure of achievement gaps for special education students, English learners, or economically disadvantaged students.

FCPS did provide data on percent proficient as measured by Virginia State Assessments in reading and mathematics and graduation data by individual sub-groups in Section (A)(4). However as these depict just two years of actual results, while the current achievement gap is illustrated, the track record of success over the past four years, as required by the criteria in this section, is not provided.

Similarly, no data were provided to support FCPS's narrative assertion that, "FCPS has been working on improving graduation and college enrollment rates over the past four years," other than the charts provided in the district response to Section (A)(4). However as these also depict just two years of actual results, the current achievement gap is illustrated, but the track record of success over the past four years, as required by the criteria in this section, is not provided.

FCPS did not adequately address subsection (b) of this criterion. Although the district states "Turning around our lowest-achieving schools is a high-priority," no data is provided in support of that statement. The narrative in the section refers to the district's "history of targeting resources to high-need *students*," its professional development evaluation system, and its professional learning community processes.

The district fully addressed subsection (c) of this criterion through its FCPS 24-7, eCART (electronic Curriculum Assessment Resource Tool) and EDSL (Education Decision Support Library).

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS fully met the required criteria in section (B)(2). This section scored at the high level of the high range.

FCPS publishes both its complete revenue and expenditure detail annually as part of its budget process. In both the Proposed and Approved budgets, school based and non-school based positions are listed by job title and total salaries and benefits are provided, along with the complete FCPS salary scales with pay rates. The budget books and salary scales are available on the public web site, as are complete job descriptions for positions in the unified salary scale. Additionally, each school has an online profile on the internet that provides staffing information as well as standard school data such as demographics. District-wide staffing categories including salary data for each school is provided in the Detailed Budget Sheets, which are available via the FCPS' public website.

The FY 2013 Detailed Budgets include not only actual FY 2009 through FY 2011 personnel salaries for all instructional and support staff but also actual non-personnel expenditures. For FY 2012 personnel and non-personnel expenditures are estimated, and the FY 2013 approved expenditures are listed   For each school, these budgets present five fiscal years of data for each school and office at FCPS' lowest expenditure level.

FCPS' approved budget documents are submitted to GFOA and the Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO) each year, and have consistently been awarded the Distinguished Budget Presentation and Meritorious Budget Awards, respectively.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	9

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS has met all of the requirements for the criteria in this section, although in in case of credit by mastery, through an exception process. This section scored at the mid level of the high range

 FCPS acknowledges that Virginia does not currently have regulations in place to provide for course credit via mastery, but provides evidence that districts do have the authority to do so for individual classes. Virginia state regulation (8VAC 20-131-110) provides that while the standard unit of credit is defined at 140 clock hours, a school district may elect to award credit on a basis other than the 140 clock hours of instruction if the local school division develops a written policy approved by the superintendent and school board which ensures that 1) the content of the course for which credit is awarded is comparable to 140 clock hours of instruction; and 2) upon completion, the student will have met the aims and objectives of the course. Fairfax County states in its narrative that it "has exercised this option in a number of cases, including the structure and schedule of the alternative/adult high schools within the division."

In 2012 Virginia adopted a new model for teacher evaluation standards which includes accountability for student academic progress, as determined by multiple measures. Underpinning the POS and the new evaluation system are collaborative structures that clarify and enhance teacher practices and address the personalized learning proposed in its proposal. For example, the district has incorporated requirements for teacher collaboration as a means to address the personalized learning needs of its students and as an expectation in its teacher performance system.

While Virginia House Bill 96, passed in 2012, postponed the implementation of an Academic and Career Plan as an accreditation requirement. FCPS will, as described in its project plan pursue the creation of such learning plans.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	3

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS did not meet all of the requirements of the criteria in this section, specifically (B)(4)(a)(i-ii) evidence of direct engagement and support for the proposals from teachers in participating schools. This section scored at the lower level of the medium range.

A presentation was provided on the "vision of the grant" to the Fairfax County Council of PTAs, the Minority Student Achievement Oversight Committee, and parents at the participating school sites. However, no letters of support from parent groups or parents were included in the application.

It is unclear the extent to which, if any, students were involved in either the development or revision of the proposal.

FCPS reports that each of the principals shared the grant vision and district PowerPoint presentation with teachers and other staff at participating schools. Included in this presentation was a letter from the Superintendent describing how the vision of the grant would build upon the work that FCPS was currently doing to enhance student achievement. However there is insufficient evidence that teachers at these schools were engaged in the development of the of the proposal nor how the proposal was revised as a result of their feedback.

The district provided letters of assurance from the district's cluster Administrative Superintendents verifying that "the principals and teachers in the identified FCPS pyramids support our district's application for the U. S. Department of Education Race to the Top grant." While FCPS stated in its narrative that "Principals and teachers at each school are in the process of submitting letters of support with signatures," no letters in support of this application from teachers, teacher groups, or principals were provided.

The district did not provide evidence of either: For LEAs with collective bargaining representation, evidence of direct engagement and support for the proposals from teachers in participating schools (as defined in this notice); or for LEAs without collective bargaining representation, at a minimum, evidence that at least 70 percent of teachers from participating schools (as defined in this notice) support the proposal.

FCPS did provide many letters of support from a variety of key stakeholders including state senators, state delegates, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce, College Access Fairfax, University of Virginia's Curry School of Education, University of Oregon's Educational Policy Improvement Center, and two other school districts in the state who will work in a consortium with FCPS to develop an open-standard registry of instructional resources" including Faquier County Public Schools.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	5

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS fully meets the requirements of the criteria in this section. This section scored at the high level of the high range.

In responding to (B)(5), FCPS stated that, In developing its high-quality plan for implementing a Personalized Student Learning Plan, FCPS had analyzed and

identified needs and gaps that the plan will address and included that analysis in the plan provided in Section (A)(3). In reviewing that plan, FCPS does sufficiently describe the analysis it will undertake to determine the applicant's current status in implementing personalized learning environments, including identified needs and gaps that the plan will address. Additionally the plan addressing the requirements of (B)(5) but located in (A)(3), included all required elements of a high quality plan. Examples of the inclusion of the analysis required include:

- For example, Section I.1.a of the plan calls for the personalized core academics analyst/coach and personalized core academics contractor to "*utilize existing Virginia Department of Education resources to develop baseline data on students' completion of Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Schools will create individual goals of FAFSA completion based on current baseline data.*"
- In section I.1.b, the plan calls for the FCPS in partnership with its personalized core academic contractor (Center for Educational Policy Research) to "explore activities that include analysis of entry-level college courses, development of large-scale performance assessment models, studies of placement tests, creation of instruments to diagnose high school programs for student college readiness criteria, and other policy initiatives designed to improve student success, with a particular focus on the needs of students historically underrepresented in higher education.
- In section 1.1.c the plan calls for staff to "Assess the number of traditionally underrepresented students who participate in AVID, are enrolled in IB, AP or Honors classes, and are attaining a "C" or better in those courses.

FCPS also presented the logic behind its proposals as described in both this section and in its initial presentation of its in logic model in Section (A)(3) above.

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C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	12

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS partially met the requirements of the criteria in Section C1 by providing goals, rationale and one or more strategies to address each subsection. However, the narrative in this section lacks key elements of a high quality plan including, timelines, deliverables, and parties responsible for carrying out those actions. Additionally, as described below, the application did not sufficiently address sections (C)(1)(a)(iv), and (C)(1)(b)(i-iii).This section scored at the upper level of the medium range.

FCPS's plan is to create a personalized learning plan for every student to ensure they:
(1) Pursue Academic Excellence
(2) Develop Essential Life Skills
(3) Demonstrate Responsibility to the Community and World

This plan creates a structured process that enables students to plan for their future in the three student achievement goals and allow parents, educators, and leaders to help students understand how to structure their learning to achieve their goals. In elementary school, students will identify their strengths and interests and set academic goals to direct their learning. In middle through high school they will build on their elementary plan to include draft course plans of study based on strengths, goal setting, career exploration, and postsecondary plans for their future.

The automation of the SLP into a an automated tool will provide the ability to integrate data into SLP feedback for planning and enable meaningful measurement of progress towards students' goals by tracking progress on their goals and prompting students to reflect on and adjust their goals, elementary through high school. Goal setting and reflection as well as draft course plans of study based on postsecondary plans will help students understand that what they are learning is key to their success in accomplishing their goals.

The district will address deep learning of core content through interdisciplinary, project-based learning, reversing the traditional manner in which students are being instructed, emphasizing the need to solve a problem and create a high quality end-product.

The district has identified and clearly described that critical academic content and skills and traits which it has identified as "absolutely imperative" to student success in college and careers.

The district's plan for accommodations and high quality strategies for high-need students is innovative and shows extensive planning.

FCPS addresses the requirements of (C)(1)(c), in Section D in which it describes its support to students in the use of the tools and resources provided.

However, the district's response does not provide a sufficient description in subsection (C)(1)(a)(iv) to understand how the district will *ensure all students* have access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives. Nor does it provide timelines, deliverables, or the parties responsible for implementing the plan. The narrative, in its entirety, for this section states "*As students pursue these deep personalized learning experiences, they will be offered opportunities to interact and learn with diverse groups of students. Although FCPS has opportunities in place for this interaction, they are offered in a piece-meal manner. An example is the Global Awareness Project which addresses the need for students to have a greater understanding of world cultures and global-interdependence, it is only offered in fifth grade due to resource constraints. This grant will enhance diversity and global awareness skills in our students in more grade-levels in an age-appropriate manner by developing these important skills.*"

Similarly, in its response to (C)(1)(b)(iii) FCPS provides a vague response, stating, *"This digital learning content will be made available via multiple resources in FCPS that leverage various multimedia approaches and technology tools. Regardless of the environment, best practice strategies will apply across content areas and grade levels – ensuring that students are getting the high-quality content and supports they need to learn for a lifetime."*

Additionally, in its responses in subsections (b)(i-iii),in addition to omitting timelines, deliverables, and parties responsible for carrying out the activities described in the narrative, the district response is insufficient to describe how the district will go about meeting its goal for the subsection. For example in addressing (b)(ii), the narrative in its entirety states "*The reform will provide a variety of high-quality instructional approaches and environments. Teachers will establish projects that align with learning styles and pacing of individual student need. Some students will receive information from an online textbook, others might read a leveled text, while others might view a streaming video of the content to be learned.*"

Throughout this section, the responses to the criteria while containing some elements of a high quality plan such as as goals and a rationale for each such goal, lack other required elements including timelines, deliverables, and the parties responsible for implementing the activities.

	Available	Score
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	12

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS states that its overall rationale for this section is that "FCPS is at a critical point in addressing gaps. Recent trends in the data show that there has been progress in reducing achievement gaps, but more rigorous, systematic work is needed to ensure consolidated practices across the district, particularly to address the growing needs of our culturally and socio-economically diverse community." As its major strategy, the district has selected professional learning communities. These structures are in place in many FCPS schools, but implementation is inconsistent particularly in struggling schools. The proposal to support effective implementation of PLC's is to "enable participating educators to engage in PCs and enhanced training to support implementation of personalized learning environments and strategies" to meet each student's academic needs.

FCPS proposes to adapt content and instruction in response to the academic needs and interests of students and concurrently develop individualized professional development for teachers on universal practices through a Responsive Instruction model to further develop differentiated practices with a focus on tiered intervention and enrichment.

As described in earlier sections of the proposal, teachers currently have access to frequent measures of individual student progress toward meeting college and career readiness standards. This system proposed will allow students to be sorted by high, middle, and low performing students and the shared with collaborative team - an essential feature of common formative assessment strategies. Additional professional development efforts will be targeted at ensuring that individual teachers and PCs *have* and *use* timely data to enable actionable efforts to personalize learning.

The proposal thoughtfully addresses training, systems, and practices to continuously improve school progress toward the goals of increasing student performance and closing achievement gaps. For example stating, "School leaders and leadership teams must be supported with professional development that enables the growth of effective learning environments to meet individual needs and accelerate student improvement through grounded universal practices. FCPS needs to support school leader development of tight and loose language around expectations/responsibilities of effective teachers and embed the implementation of the new teacher evaluation process around the facets of universal Best Practices. School leaders need to have a deep understanding of universal Tier 1 supports and how that translates into effective teacher behaviors observed in the classroom. School leaders will need access to data that promotes collective and individual efficacy from all stakeholders around student learning and a pathway for improved practices based on a school's community needs." The proposal also carefully addresses the need to match processes and tools to student needs with specific resources and approaches.

However the district response to subsection (C)(2)(a)(iv) does not sufficiently address the criterion. Instead of addressing improving "teachers' and principals' practice and effectiveness by using feedback provided by the LEA's teacher and principal evaluation systems, the proposal addresses "teacher and principal professional development in a continuous improvement system." The application is silent on both teacher and principal evaluation in this section. The narrative does not describe how educators will engage in training or professional development that supports their capacity to improve teacher and principal practice by using feedback provided by the LEA's teacher and principals evaluation systems, including frequent feedback on individual and collective effectiveness, as well as providing recommendations, supports, and interventions as needed for improvement.

The district response to subsection (C)(2)(c)(i) states only that, " FCPS has supports in place to further develop administrative leadership in schools in order to establish processes for a continuous improvement mindset focused on increasing student achievement. Steps to further develop educational leaders who promote the success of all students are optimal." This response does not address how information from sources such as the district's teacher evaluation system helps school leaders and school leadership teams assess and take steps to improve individual and collective educator effectiveness and school culture and climate for the purpose of continuous school improvement.

FCPS's response to subsection (C)(2)(d) does not sufficiently address the criterion It states, in its entirety, "Our district reform proposes the continued development of integrated processes in a professional development infrastructure to enhance the skills of all teachers across the district to respond to individual learner needs. The district reform will increase the number of students receiving instruction from high effective teachers. Educators across the division will receive professional development around universal practices within a continuous improvement model." This response does not include the elements of a high quality plan, including key goals, strategies, timelines, deliverables and the parties responsible for implementing the activities for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from high effective teachers and principals including in hard to staff schools, subjects and specialty areas as required by the criterion.

Overall, the responses in this section do not provide all of the required elements of a high quality plan, such as as goals, activities, timelines, deliverables, and the parties responsible for implementing the activities.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	**15**	**13**

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS met all requirements of the criteria in this section except in providing the elements of a high quality plan for refinements to its existing system supporting personalized learning. This section scored at the mid-level of the high range.

For example, FCPS in its narrative response to subsection (a) states that it "has well-defined practices, policies, and rules that facilitate personalized learning by organizing the central office to provide a high degree of support and services to all participating schools...and are designed to provide personalized instruction to our students." FCPS however proposes to further refine its processes should its proposal be funded. The elements of a high quality plan for this refinements are not included in this section.

FCPS states that it has existing practices, polices, and rules provide school leadership teams in participating schools with sufficient flexibility and autonomy over factors such as school schedules and calendars, school personnel decisions and staffing models, roles and responsibilities for educators and non-educators, and school-level budgets and provides sufficient autonomy to school-based leadership teams to tailor learning within their buildings in order to meet the needs of diverse communities of students.

The district asserts that principals currently have the flexibility to arrange schedules, determine staffing models, make budgetary decisions and assign roles and responsibilities to school team members. Further, leadership teams have flexibility on how positions, including teachers, reading teachers,special education teachers, advanced academic teachers, instructional coaches, assessment coaches, school-based technology specialists and librarians are distributed within their schools.

Existing policies and infrastructure allow students to earn credits and progress based on mastery, based on the exception process described earlier, demonstrating flexibility to personalize student learning. Evidence was provided in the form of the current practice of awarding credit in world languages by passing a district exam.

FCPS has existing authority and uses that authority to give students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways. An electronic assessment tool called Horizon enables students to demonstrate mastery of standards in an efficient manner. Horizons contains a variety of division assessments, including Standards of Learning practice tests, catalog tests and correlated test items that may be used to create assessments.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	7

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS met the criteria in subsections (a), (b) and (d), and partially met the criteria for subsection (c) except that no section contained all of the elements required of a high quality plan. While goals and rationale were included in the subsections, activities, deliverables, timelines and the parties responsible for implementing the plan were not included. This section scored at the high-level of the medium range.

FCPS has provided evidence that it currently provides "strong technology support for educators and staff via the Technology Support Specialists, the IT Service Desk, and the functional support teams. The technology support specialists provide on-site technology support and facilitate the delivery of technology solutions in all schools, centers and administrative offices.

The IT Service Desk is the single point of contact for customers to request IT services, support, and information. The IT Service Desk facilitates the rapid resolution of issues, provides after school information sessions, quick-reference guides, online how-to videos, newsletters, and informational messages to assist users.

Students and parents have access to a variety of training and support resources. These include direct support to students in schools. They also include technology, telephone and online support to parents and students via the FCPS 24-7 Learning help desk, after-school information sessions, quick-reference guides, online how-to videos, newsletters, and informational messages sent via the FCPS Keep In Touch communication system.

While FCPS does not have an entirely open data format at this time, it will use project funds to further the use of open data formats by opening student achievement data to parents and students and allow parents and students to export their information in order to create personal learning profiles to which they would have 24/7 access. Currently, instructional resources are provided in formats appropriate to the resource, such as documents (pdf and Microsoft Word), audio and video (mp4), wikis (HTML), and data (csv and XML).

To ensure that the district uses interoperable data systems, FCPS uses technology from webMethods to establish a scalable applications infrastructure to enable information sharing across enterprise applications (based on web services and XML). Additionally, The Open Community Action Gateway will provide a front-end that leverages FCPS interoperable data systems so data is presented to stakeholders in a user-friendly interface that enables actions in a personalized manner for students.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	15

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS fully meets all required criteria in this section. This section scored at the high level of the high range.

The district describes a rigorous continuous improvement process that will provide timely and regular feedback on progress toward project goals and opportunities for project corrections. In this model each component developed in the project proposal will go through a five step quality control process. As the project deliverable moves through each stage (development, testing and re-design, limited release, full implementation, and sustainable implementation stages) stakeholder input is solicited and improvements to the system made in response to that feedback. The continuous improvement is ongoing even through the sustainable implementation phase as users come up with creative and innovative ways to leverage the tools and integrate them with a variety of existing initiatives and programs.

FCSD included in its continuous improvement plan strategy that it will leverage existing resources for regularly communicating the anticipated milestones, status and improvements of components to stakeholders. Those resources might include web-based timely updates, electronic bulletins, in-person presentations and various other means to reach a diverse population of stakeholders.leveraging existing resources for regularly communicating the anticipated milestones, status and improvements of components to stakeholders. Those resources might include web-based timely updates, electronic bulletins, in-person presentations and various other means to reach a diverse population of stakeholders.

In its narrative the distict committed to developing methods for monitoring and measuring the quality of the investments funded by this grant.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	4

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS partially addressed the criteria in this section. This section scored at the high level of the high range.

The district lists a broad array of communication strategies currently in use. These include: internal and external electronic newsletters, fanouts, press releases, in-house news stories and other public information techniques already at the division's disposal. Other existing strategies currently used in project meetings include teleconferencing into regular meetings, web-based sharing sites in which project timelines and monitoring reports are posted, webinar presentations, and additional in-person presentations to stakeholder groups like the School Board, school teams, parents and others who have a vested interest in the project outcomes.

However, in light of the emphasis in this grant on high needs students and their families, the district will likely need to expand the processes currently in use to address the needs of this population to ensure access to the personalized learning tools and environment.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	1

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS met some of the criteria in this section. However, many of the criteria were not sufficiently addressed as described below and included in the chart below. The section scored at the high level of the low range.

For those goals in which performance measures were set, the goals were ambitious yet achievable considering current performance, the project plan, and resources to be devoted to these goals. Target performance goals, as measured by the Virginia State Assessments in reading, mathematics, science and history, call for a proficiency level of 85% or higher for RTT schools and district wide by 2016-17 for "all students" and every subgroup. At individual schools however, for those sub-groups with 10 or fewer students, annual and final outcome performance targets were not provided. Not setting annual growth targets for these small groups at the individual school level is arguably appropriate, but it is confusing since baseline measures *are* provided for three years in which *actual* performance for each of these subgroups, regardless of the number of students in each, is shown.

The district did not include performance targets for its Grades 4-8 Youth Survey Data, nor is a final outcome measure included.

FCPS did not provide performance targets for its career readiness targets at grades 9-12, stating "This year FCPS is pilot testing a new workplace readiness skills test developed by the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service at the University of Virginia. The new test addresses twenty-one workplace readiness areas. New goals for career readiness and industry certifications are under development."

FCPS did not include performance targets in either:

- All (a): The number and percentage of participating students, by subgroup whose teacher of record and principal are a highly effective teacher and a highly effective principal or
- All (b): The number and percentage of participating students, by subgroup whose teacher of record and principal are an effective teacher and an effective principal

The district did not include the second required PreK-3 measure (age-appropriate non-cognitive indicator of growth)

Overall, FCPS included only 9 performance measures, rather than the 12 to 14 measures required by the criteria.

Applicable Population	Performance Measure
All	a. The number and percentage of participating students, by subgroup (as defined in this notice), whose teacher of record (as defined in this notice) and principal are a highly effective teacher (as defined in this notice) and a highly effective principal (as defined in this notice). Proposed performance measure: Not included b. The number and percentage of participating students, by subgroup (as defined in this notice), whose teacher of record (as defined in this notice) and principal are an effective teacher (as defined in this notice) and an effective principal (as defined in this notice). Proposed performance measure: Not included
PreK-3	a. Applicant must propose at least one age-appropriate measure of students' academic growth (e.g., language and literacy development or cognition and general learning, including early mathematics and early scientific development). Proposed performance measure: The number and percentage of participating students by subgroup who are on track to college and career readiness based on the following on-track indicator--FCPS' Passages Indicator--Grade 3 test takers who took and passed the following four Standards of Learning tests: reading, mathematics, science and history 85% b. Applicant must propose at least one age-appropriate non-cognitive indicator of growth (e.g., physical well-being and motor development, or social-emotional development). – Not included
4-8	a. The number and percentage of participating students, by subgroup, who are on track to college- and career-readiness based on the applicant's on-track indicator. Proposed performance measure: The number and percentage of participating students by subgroup who are on track to college and career readiness based on the following on-track indicator--FCPS' Passages Indicator--Grade 6 test takers who took and passed the following four Standards of Learning tests: reading, mathematics, science and history. 85% b. Applicant must propose at least one grade-appropriate academic leading indicator of successful implementation of its plan. Proposed performance measure: The number and percentage of participating students by subgroup who are on track to college and career readiness based on the following on-track indicator--FCPS' Passages Indicator--Grade 8 test takers who took and passed the following five Standards of Learning tests: English: Reading, English Writing, mathematics, science and history. c. Applicant must propose at least one grade-appropriate health or social-emotional leading indicator of successful implementation of its plan. Proposed performance measure: Youth Survey Data – overall baseline only no performance measures nor outcome measure
9-12	a. The number and percentage of participating students who complete and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form. Proposed performance measure: FAFSA completion – all 9 high schools, plus RTT group and all district group – all students only – 10 to 14 percentage point growth to 60% in 206-17. b. The number and percentage of participating students, by subgroup, who are on track to college- and career-readiness based on the applicant's on-track indicator (as defined in this notice). Proposed performance measure: The number and percentage of participating students by subgroup who are on track to college and career readiness based on the following on track indicator--FCPS' Passages Indicator--Grade 12 test takers who took and passed the following five Standards Of Learning End-of-CourseTests: English Reading, English Writing, United States/Virginia History, Chemistry, and Algebra 2. – 85% c. Applicant must propose at least one measure of career-readiness in order to assess the number and percentage of participating students who are or are on track to being career-ready. Proposed performance measure: Applicant must propose at least one measure of career-readiness in order to assess the number and percentage of participating students who are or are on track to being career-ready.

Percent of all seniors who by the end of grade 12 earned at least one industry certification. In 2008, 17% of all seniors passed at least one industry certification. At that time, an aspirational goal was set for 2015; this aspirational goal was for 33% of seniors to pass at least one industry certification by the end of grade 12. The aspirational goal was met, two years early, in 2013. Increasing graduation requirements may influence the sustainability of having 33% percent of all seniors earn at least one industry certification by the end of grade 12.

d.   Applicant must propose at least one grade-appropriate academic leading indicator of successful implementation of its plan. Proposed performance measure: Average composite scores on SAT. According to College Board a score of 1500 out of 2400 indicates a 65 percent likelihood of achieving a B average or higher during the first year of college.

e.   Applicant must propose at least one grade-appropriate health or social-emotional leading indicator of successful implementation of its plan. Proposed performance measure: Youth Survey Data Division-level Percent of Students selecting the desired response for each item in the composite – No growth targets set

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	5

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS's proposes a three pronged evaluation approach in which:

- The Personalized Student Learning Plan component will be evaluated via two methods to determine the effect on student engagement and student performance: performance measure comparison and student survey using both quantitative and qualitative data measurements.
- The Customized PDM will be evaluated using the percentage of teachers and principals in each school, performing at the highly effective, effective, needs improvement, and ineffective level, will be available under the system described in the proposal and through the observational data obtained in site-based classroom observational data.
- Evaluation of the Open Community Action Plan component which will center on the goals of higher stakeholder engagement and degree of use.

The district's plan provides a clear and high quality approach to the continuous evaluation of the effectiveness of RTT-D activities that fully addresses the requirements in this criterion. This section scored at the high level of the high range

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	9

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS fully meets the criteria in this section. This section scored at the higher level of the high range.

The budget proposed in this section is within the funding limitations proposed for the number of students participating in the project. The uses proposed and amounts for those uses appears reasonable and sufficient to support the activities proposed for this project.

The proposed budget is provides a comprehensive view of the funding that will be used to support grant activities. It clearly identifies the source of all the funds that will be used to support RTT-D activities, including those that will be expended from sources other than RTT-D. For each expenditure , FCPS provides a description of the expense and a rationale for both the expenditure and amount of the projected expense. The district also identifies one-time investment expenditures.

However it was unclear why in the budget provided in Budget Table 1-1: Overall Budget Table, the total RTT funds request of $39,523,185.47 differed from the total funds request in the Budget Requirements showin in the Assurances Section of the proposal of $39,742,014.80.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	3

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS did not present a convincing plan to address the requirements of the criteria in this section. It scored at the lower level of the medium range.

This section lacks a high quality plan for sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant. FCPS sustainability plan rests on cost savings to be realized through the project itself. The district includes three ways in which the activities in the proposed project will save funds following the project. These are:

1. Once FCPS is able to take advantage of open collaboration formats such as the Learning Registry, resources that are being allocated to create materials for eCART will no longer be needed. Technology and licensing savings are also expected as FCPS may not need to build sophisticated in-house technology and data warehousing capacity.
2. The Customized Professional Development Model is expected to significantly reduce costs of delivering teacher training across the district
3. Consolidating disparate sources of data on student achievement will help to deliver technology savings to FCPS by making it more efficient for stakeholders to search, access, and act-upon student data almost immediately.

FCPS does not provide sufficient evidence that its plan will result in the significant costs savings that would be required to ensure sustainability of the project.

The response does not address support from state and local government leaders and continuing external and internal financial support.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	**10**	**3**

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

FCPS partially meets the criteria in this section as shown below. The section scored at the lower level of the medium range.

(1) FCPS proposes as its integration project, its partnership with Fairfax County Government in the development of a census survey that is administered to all 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th grade students. The survey looks at protective and risk factors as well as at healthy behaviors. FCPS states that it uses the survey results provide health and social/emotional indicators that aid FCPS in identifying areas of focus and facilitate effective and efficient deployment of resources to enhance assets and strengths in students. FCPS provides no evidence to show that the partnership is sustainable.

(2) FCPS has identified 9 "grade level" performance indicators. It appears that the survey itself, and thus the performance measures can not be disaggregated below the grade level. Therefore no performance indicators are at the subgroup or individual student level. The measures selected do not include academic measures.

(3) The application does not sufficiently describe how the survey results will be tracked nor how "grade level" results could be tracked at the "student level" as required by these criteria. Nor does it sufficiently address the requirements that the data can be sorted in order to target resources toward those students facing significant challenges. The narrative does not address how this project can be scaled beyond the participating students.

(4) The district reports that it uses these survey results to provide health and social/emotional indicators that aid FCPS in identifying areas of focus and facilitate effective and efficient deployment of resources to enhance assets and strengths in students. FCPS reports that it is partnering with the Community Services Board from the Fairfax County Government, FPY, coalitions, foundations (American Federation of Suicide Prevention, Josh Anderson Foundation), parent organizations, and other community agencies to develop and identify evidenced-based tools to increase awareness and develop competence to successfully implement intervention and prevention strategies. However,the narrative does not provide information on how those partnerships would integrate education and social-emotional services for participating students.

(5) This project centers on assessing needs. It provides an inventory at grades 6, 8, 10 and 12 of the needs and assets of students in specific areas of social-emotional health. These data would provide a rich resource with which to engage parents and families of participating students and evaluate provided supports within the areas surveyed. The survey is annually produced and can thus be used to routinely assess progress in improving the social-emotional health of FCPS students.

(6) FCPS provided baseline measures, but did not provide annual performance measures or describe the desired results for students.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	**Met/Not Met**	**Met**

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

FCPS's proposal built on all four of the core educational assurance areas:

(1) adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy

(2) building data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals with data about how they can improve instruction

(3) recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most

(4) turning around lowest-achieving schools

Specific evidence supporting the meeting of Priority 1 by the district includes:

The district's selection of 9 feeder patterns, and all students within those patterns, as its participating schools demonstrated a well thought out approach to its efforts. The feeder patterns selected were those lowest performing in the district.

FCPS fully and comprehensively articulated a LEA-wide reform and plan showing how the proposal will be scaled up to support district-wide change. It set ambitious goals for increasing the percentage of students graduating from high school and enrolling in college.

The district fully met requirements for increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments, including making student assessment data available to students, parents, and educators in ways to make those results more useful.

FCPS proposed a high quality plan for the analysis of its status in implementing personalized learning environments, including identified needs and gaps the plan will address.

The district's plan creates a structured process that enables students to plan for their future in the three student achievement goals and allow parents, educators, and leaders to help students understand how to structure their learning to achieve their goals. In elementary school, students will identify their strengths and interests and set academic goals to direct their learning. In middle through high school, they will build on their elementary plan to include draft course plans of study based on strengths, goal setting, career exploration, and postsecondary plans for their future.

The automation of the existing student learning plan into a an automated tool will provide the ability to integrate data into SLP feedback for planning and enable meaningful measurement of progress towards students' goals by tracking progress on their goals and prompting students to reflect on and adjust their goals, elementary through high school. Goal setting and reflection as well as draft course plans of study based on postsecondary plans will help students understand that what they are learning is key to their success in accomplishing their goals.

The district will address deep learning of core content through interdisciplinary, project-based learning, reversing the traditional manner in which students are being instructed, emphasizing the need to solve a problem and create a high quality product.

The district has identified and clearly described that critical academic content and skills and traits which it has identified as "absolutely imperative" to student success in college and careers.

The proposal thoughtfully addresses training, systems, and practices to continuously improve school progress toward the goals of increasing student performance and closing achievement gaps, and carefully addresses the need to match processes and tools to student needs with specific resources and approaches.

The applicant demonstrated that it had existing practices, policies, and rules to provide school leadership teams in each school with flexibility and autonomy to implement the plans.

FCPS demonstrated a strong existing technology infrastructure and support system and clearly explained how grant funds would be used to enhance this system to provide personalized learning.

The district has a strong communications system in place with multiple strategies to meet the needs of diverse stakeholders.

The district's approach to evaluating the effectiveness of investments was strong.

Taken together these elements included in the FCPS application represent a thoughtful and promising proposal that builds on the four assurances areas and meets Priority 1.

Total	210	144

Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0435VA-2 for Fairfax County Public Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	9

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) articulated a comprehensive and coherent reform vision and addressed how it would incorporate College and Career Readiness (CCR), integrate interoperable data systems, create customized programs to ensure highly effective teachers and principals, and improve its lowest-achieving schools. Its vision also incorporates 21st century skill-building (in students and teachers), academic excellence pursued through a variety of means, and a demonstrated responsibility to the community and world.

FCPS's vision focuses on the rapidly changing demographics of its students as the county grows and more disadvantaged, limited English proficient stduents are enrolled in the district. This vision addresses how FCPS would fund initiatives to continue its impressive 4-year 50% reduction of achievement gaps record.

Specifically, this proposal mentions three focal areas:

- personalized student learning plan
- customized PD plans for teachers and leaders
- Open Community Action plan and its Open Community Gateway

	Available	Score
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS's approach is well articulated and specifcally addresses its highest need students. It met the requirements:

- named the 76 schools (9HS, 10 MS, and 57 ES) in 9 pyramids (feeder patterns) with 64,596 students
- 48% (30,989) of students are from low-income families
- 59.9% (38,753) of students are high-need

- reflected schools with greater needs: 32 of 38 Title I schools included
- ESOL service receivers is 30.9% for selected schools

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	10

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS has a high quality and detailed plan with timelines that include:

- FAFSA completion
- CCR and college visits
- expand AVID
- Young Scholars summer school
- embedded skill building programs
- Project Based Learning to aid engagement of high need students
- Life and Career Skills programs
- expand counseling programs
- integrate Global Awareness skills
- develop media and technology skills
- enagge stakeholders
- develop Student Learning Plan Tool (good list of deliverables)
- curriculum pacing
- delivery of needed supplies to low income families
- teachers and princiapl PD in support of outcomes with a variety of programs and PLCs

The timeline, when possible (some programs require future planning), details how programs will be scaled up throughout the district. Not all parts of the high quality plan will be scaled by year 4, especially given the funding problems FCPS articulated in the previous section.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	10

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS addressed all the RTTD criteria for this section very well. It clearly explained why it chose state math and reading criteria for each school and how it determined achievement gaps for each school for each category.

Achievement gaps are measured by using the state of Virginia's high performing Asian subgroup due to its high pass rate on state assessments. A four-year graduation cohort (federal definition) is used for graduation rates. Very detailed summative assessment data (based on state assessments which are college and career ready-aligned) for each school group is defined and ambitious yet achievable goals are defined for every subject.

FCPS also provided very good rationale for how it will reach projected high school graduation rates and rates are indicated for every high school. FCPS addressed the OPTIONAL criteria and wisely included the use of National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) data (the accepted national standard) to track its high school graduates' college enrollment and completion of all degree and credit-bearing credential programs.

B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	9

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The data that FCPS presented did not indicate a 4-year record of success, especially in math reading--chief target areas in this proposal. It showed a 10-year record of a state statistic that was not explained. The absence of this major criteria has resulted in a lower score.

The district's plan to improve this section's criteria addresses three key areas:

- Content
- Pedagogy
- Relationships

The plan to continue academic improvement for all groups, subgroups, and low-achieving schools for grant criteria is based on solid research-based (Ferguson, Ruskey) practices. It has 5 major programs--across all grade levels--addressing CCR. FCPS also surveyed educators to asess its PD and how to improve its practivces, especially in PLCs.

FCPS makes student data available to students, parents and teachers through eCART and EDSL. This was an exceptionally well written section.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS documeneted that it reports via public meetings and on its website for the district and each school for ALL the levels indicated above,

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS provided detailed information about its legacy of setting its own independent standards that exceed state standards. The county district has 3 tiered learning approaches that provide a clear path for student scaffolding and differentiation:

- Essential Standards
- Expected Standards
- Extended Standards

FCPS has surpassed state requirements for teacher evaluation by aligning PD resources to standards and KPIs. This allows teachers greater flexibility in creating SMARTR goals and collaborative structures.

FCPS plans to use RTTD funds to create student learnign plans based on its already incorporated CCSS-based district standrads. FCPS has already demonstrated that autonomy and successful condition exist in Virginia.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	5

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS provided focused letters of support from political and community leaders as well as national education experts (UVA, EPIC). It provided a well-done PowerPoint shared with internal and external stakeholders, including all targeted groups.

However, a critical component, evidence of teacher support, was not provided. No signature from an appropriate teacher group was included on the signature page. The proposal lacked evidence that teachers were meaningfully included in the proposal development.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	5

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

In this and previous sections (as reviewed) FCPS provides a high-quality plan based on thorough analysis of past success (50% decrease in achievement gaps in past 4 years) and changing demographics in the county. Due to changing demographics, FCPS is now serving a large contingent of homeless and low-income students and it plans to target these students with the plan created for RTTD.

FCPS identified the 4 priorities and the programs it proposes to address them:

- integrated college and career readiness (CCR) programs
- interoperable data systems to communicate with stakeholders
- customized educator and leader PD
- detailed in a previous section its selection of lowest performing students upon which to focus for this grant

C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	8

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS did address all the section requirements, and in general its plan is to implement a quality personalized Student Learning Plan (SLP) for all the students involved with this grant. However, even though specific parts of the criteria were mentioned throughout this section, the text that FCPS provided generally agreed that the specific requirements (parent involvement, integrated student/parent data systems, focus on diverse cultures, need for CCR) were important, but did not provide any specific examples of successful strategies it intended to employ. This lack of detail in the plan undermines FCPS' ability to fully implement (C)(1)(b) and (c).

For instance, high-need students will receive Tier III interventions, but stating this does not describe in-depth that FCPS knows what those successful interventions are. Another example was the goal to scale up elementary diversity appreciation classes, and although topics that could be covered were listed in the appendix, it was not clear that FCPS would be successful in recognizing what those would be.

FCPS is focused on skill-development in this application. It has studied and knows how to describe 21st century skills needed, but the only program named that incorporates those skills is PBL. PBL is planned for K-12 levels which is ambitious (especially for lower grades), but not supported by the words used in this section.

Also, FCPS mentions the CEPR program, but has included a letter of support from EPIC, not CEPR. These are 2 different approaches to developing integrated CCR measures, and it is not clear that FCPS is planning the CEPR approach as it mentions actions that EPC focuses on (transcript analysis).

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	14

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS plans to implement a customized Professional Development Model (PDM) in order to provide educators with state-of-the-art training and job-embedded experiences. The district has already developed a very good Best Practices Framework which focuses on:

- creating a student-centered environment
- assessing student learning
- planning and teaching for student learning

While the framework has been identified, it is not fully realized in practice. Using this proposal's good idea to create vertical pyramid alignment, the framework will allow PD vertically and between pyramids so that best practices become embedded in each and every classroom.

In addition, FCPS plans to provide PBL training for all grade levels. This is a critical element as PBL is planned for all grades.

FCPS has a very good student achievement model illustrated in its proposal that guides educators to: pre-assess, teach and assess, and intervene and enrich. However, it states that it does not have the tiered experience necessary to meet its increasingly diversified student body, so it remains to be seen if FCPS can implement this model fully.

FCPS provides a robust framework for teacher and leader PD. To its credit, it has developed a master=s level 6 hour course with GMU which is provided free of charge to its leaders and teachers.

FCPS will study offering online courses with this grant, so it does not name specific resources in this area.

One key area this proposal does not fully address, and that is critical to success, is what specific student data elements it plans to include in order to make its student data system as robust as described. It does not state how it will measure students' interests or other characteristics (nor does it define other characteristics). It does not mention how it will measure or measure progress in social-emotional characteristics. This vagueness about data elements undermines the ability to create a robust data system.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	**15**	**11**

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS stated that it has an central office committed to providing individualized support services for all students. The grant would allow FCPS to expand services for its increasingly diverse student population. FCPA plans to implement an Open Community Model to build a Community Action Gateway to allow focus on 21st century skill-building.

Current policies and practices allow principals great flexibility to arrange schedules, determine staffing models, make budget decisions, and assign roles and responsibilities to school team members.

FCPS plans to expand its current student-mastery approaches. Current programs include: the ability to earn World Language credit with an exam. Future online programming will expand these opportunities.

The Horizon electronic assessment tool offers students multiple opportunities and times to advance their learning and teachers resources to expand student learning opportunities.

However, critical to the intent of this grant, FCPS plans to implement more programs than currently exist that target ELLs (a self-described growth population) and students with disabilities--and it does not name or describe any of its current programs. These students are a key focal area of the grant and FCPS provided little specific information on ways these populations would be addressed.

	Available	Score
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	**10**	**9**

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS provided a detailed high-quality plan to support a personalized learning system for all particpating students. Its FCPS 24-7 Learning tool allows all students to expand their learning resources outside the classroom. The current toolset is limited and FCPS plans to open its system to entrepreneurs and innovators to create new products.

The second tool, EDSL, is a data warehosue and decision support system that allows leaders to manage their school, and includes information on assessments, discipline, grades, and attendance. FCPS plans to expand access to students and parents with this grant.

eCART has instructional resources for more than 100 subjects and will be expanded with grant funds. FCPS hopes to create an open-standard registry with neighboring school districts (that provided letters of support).

FCPS and parents encourage students to Bring-Your-Own-Device to campus. Recognizing that most low0income students do not have access to these tools, FCPS plans to expand its computer access practices within the grant and with community resources. Access to internet and WiFi is aided by maps and supporting community organizations.

Interoperable data systems are supported by FCPS's use of webMethods, and mamanges user identities and role access to information. The planned Open Community Gateway will expand access for currently unconnected families. Current IT staff will be augmented with contracted resources to establish these programs.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	**15**	**11**

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS identified a good process by which it intends to implement the grant. However, a critical component of a continuous improvement process is a feedback loop, and other than mentioning that feedback and evaluation may be used, the system identified does not show how feedback will be used to continuously improve and points were deducted for this omission..

Using the Plan-Do-Study-Act Model it has incorporated the Plan and Do portions into this grant request. FCPS will incorporate Study and Act into its process by having grant-funded and FCPS staff use a 5 part continuous improvement process (which is also supported by the budget and timelines provided in other sections):

- Development of the 3 major grant activities: Personalized Student Learning Plans, Customized Professional Development Model, and Open Community Action Plan
- Testing and Release of associated components
- Limited Release to beta-test programs
- Full Implementation
- Sustainable Implementation

.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

In order to support a high-quality continuous imrpovement plan and engage major stakeholders, FCPS will continue to employ its very high-quality standard project management approach. This approach keeps project team members and major stakeholders engaged in the process through meetings that monitor and examine milestones and deliverables via in-person, teleconferencing, web-based, and/or webinars.

Communciation vehicles already in use include internal and external electronic newsletters, public meetings,and press releases.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	4

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS provided a very well-developed, high quality plan for measuring teacher effectiveness that also includes a key standard for student academic performance (40% of total). Teachers are expected to have SMARTR goals and must meet 7 performance standards to be rated as either highly effective, effective, developing, needs improvement, or ineffective. Explanations of all these were provided in the proposal.

Student measures for each required sub-group and race and ethnicity were provided and include:

- PreK-3 state assessment performance (but **no social-emotional measures**)
- 4-8 state assessment performance
- 4-8 social-emotional measures
- 9-12 state assessment performance
- 9-12 FAFSA completions
- 9-12 graduates with one industry certification
- 9-12 SAT score increases
- 9-12 social-emotional development measures

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	5

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS provided a high-quality detailed plan to measure the effectiveness of its proposed investments in developing personalized student learning plans, customized teacher professional development and the Open Community Action Plan,. Specific measures include: student surveys, technology usage, number of formative assessments given to students, number of effective teachers and leaders corresponding with students, classroom observations, and all summative assessments.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	9

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS' overall budget request is $39,523,186 with an additional $3,039,713 provided by other sources. Funding to expand personalized student and PD learning systems are appropriately focused on the type of technical expertise that FCPS does not have (database system contractors, administrators, and programmers)-- this is a good investment to aid future growth. Funding also funds the PD system, creation of high quality curriculum materials, and 21st century skills office -- another good investment that can be expanded.

Overall, 46% of direct costs are for personnel and 16% for fringe benefits (FCPS has not been able to fund these due to recent very tight budgets). Another 25% is dedicated to contractual work.

FCPS has presented a very good budget aligned with its high-quality plan to promote personalized learning systems for students and educators.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	5

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

FCPS did not report a sustainability plan for this grant. Instead, FCPS makes an argument that its planned grant programs and work-scope will eventually save it money in 3 key areas due to greater efficiency:

- Student Learning Plans: personalization will achieve outcomes more efficiently, thus reducing expenses and replacement of current eCART programs with learning registry programs will save the expenses of eCART, and need to build in-house sophisticated technology and data warehousing systems
- Teacher Customized PD will be delivered in two ways (job-embedded and online) thus reducing costs to cover teachers attending meetings outside the school by hiring substitutes
- Technology improvements delivered through the grant will consolidate disparate sources of data and the resulting efficiencies will lower costs

The weakness of this argument is that FCPS does not provide any data that it has any metrics for these indicators.

Additionally, FCPS hopes for current employees-learning to be broadened through exposure to learning from outside contractor experts.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	5

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

FCPS has developed a sophisticated survey with the county government to assess grade 6, 8, 10, and 12 students' health and social emotional behaviors.   Based on the survey FCPS has indicated 5 indicators each for grades 4-8 and 9-12:

- demonstration of honesty, responsibility, and leadership
- develop resilience and self-control
- possess the skills to manage and resolve conflict
- develop practical life skills
- make healthy and safe life choices

FCPS is also partnering with the county Community Services Board, parent organizations, and other community organizations to create tools to address high rates of depression reported by youth. Working with faith-based organizations and the county, FCPS offers families a free one-time appointment with a mental heath professional through its FCPS Parent Clinic.

FCPS did not adequately address (5) above which undermines success in integration of services and the ability to achieve this section's goals.

For educators, the analysis of patterns in suspension and expulsion data has shown a greater need to join forces with the county. FCPS has collaborated on a university training program on mental health issues.   It plans to inform its FCPS clinical staff with focused PD.

The plan does not address how teachers and school leaders could enhance the social-emotional well-being of their students.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

FCPS has met this criteria by providing a high-quality plan to create both personalized learning systems for students and customized PD for teachers and leaders. It has addressed all required criteria for this priority:

- college and career readiness
- development and integration of interoperable data systems
- customized professional development programs to ensure highly effective teachers and principals
- a focus on improving its lowest-achieving schools

FCPS's vision focuses on the rapidly changing demographics of its students as the county grows and more disadvantaged, limited English proficient students are enrolled in the district. This vision addresses how FCPS would fund initiatives to continue its impressive 4-year 50% reduction of achievement gaps record.

Specifically, this proposal mentions three focal areas:

- personalized student learning plan
- customized PD plans for teachers and leaders
- Open Community Action plan and its Open Community Gateway

Total	210	159

Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0435VA-3 for Fairfax County Public Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	10

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Fairfax County Public Schools offers a reform vision for systemic change across district schools, moving from what they have done well in the past but has become less relevant (standards-based education focused on core academics) to what is critical for success in college and career (learning and innovation skills). The vision builds on each of the core assurance areas, identifying a key challenge within each one to program implementation.

The system change envisioned is expected to be made through the consolidation and integration of process, technology, and open community action to ensure student success, resulting in a personalized student learning plan for each student, a customized professional development model for each educator, and

an Open Community Action Plan to engage all stakeholders within the community.

The projects will focus on high-need student populations, thus ensuring an approach to personalized learning using an equity lens.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	9

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The application provides a clear description of the process thinking used to select participant schools: high schools and their feeder middle- and elementary schools with higher than district average percentages of high-need students (qualify for free/reduced meals, limited English proficient, students with disabilities, high student-mobility school).

No information is provided as to the level of this decision making or if it was handled by an administrator, department, or team of individuals. Similarly, no evidence is offered as to whether or not the process to be included as a participant "pyramid" of schools was open to allow schools to share their opinions prior to the final selection.

The application includes charts showing the total number of participating students at the targeted 76 schools within the nine pyramids of schools (high school, middle schools, and elementary schools in a single feeder pattern). Figures reveal the number and percent of participating low-income students from each school, along with the number of participating educators and other key data.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	10

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal includes a lengthy logic model that supports the district's reform plan as it moves beyond the participant schools into and beyond all district schools. The model begins with the three outcomes emanating from the core of the plan: the personalized student learning plan, customized professional development model, and open community action plan. For each outcome, the model provides useful data such as the context/need, major strategies to be incorporated for implementation, evidence of progress and results. The model continues by returning to the goals of Race to the Top-District: accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing equity through personalized student support grounded in common and individual tasks that are based on student academic interests. The applicant identifies numerous sub-goals within each, offering detailed activities, annual timelines, deliverables, and the responsible parties for each. The information within this logic model is comprehensive and provides a clear description of the implementation of program elements over the course of the grant.

The last column on the charts for the goals identifies the responsible parties for the implementation. In several instances the Program Manager is listed. The budget narrative lists two individuals with this title. In other areas, the responsibilities fall to a department (i.e. Department of Professional Learning and Accountability). This lack of specificity reduces the accountability of the document during project implementation. (As this was not required for the criterion, no points are deducted.)

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	7

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The application includes charts of annual goals for the participant nine pyramids of high-need schools, focusing on proficiency status on mathematics and reading assessments, the achievement gap among subgroups, high school graduation rates, and college enrollment. A summary of these goal areas is a useful tool. The baseline data for math suggests a significant scoring shift between 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 when almost all of t he schools experienced a major decline in the percentage of students who scored in the proficient or above range. The annual goals following this shift are incremental, resulting in proficiency rates that are almost always below the 2010-2011 rate. Working just from the baseline of 2011-2012, however, the annual goals are ambitious but achievable, with each school meeting a proficiency rate of 90% or above following the Race to the Top District support.

Annual goals for mathematics are not included for two schools (Mason Crest and Hunters Woods) with no narrative explanation for the omission.

New standards for English/Language Arts were not included, as new state standards are expected to be implemented during the 2012-2013 school year. Intermediate goals will be determined based on results from tests from that year.

Decreasing achievement gaps as shown on the chart in the narrative are provided for math, but not E/LA, as new standards will impact specific numerical figures. The targets for each subgroup are the same: a decrease of the gap by 50% after two full years of the program (by 2014-15) and the total elimination of the gap for every subgroup relative to the highest performing group immediately post-grant. These figures show the same calculations for each subgroup, with no indication that any given subgroup might be expected to decrease the achievement gap at a pace at variance from the other subgroups..

The four-year graduation rate goal is an overall increase from 77.47 to 79.79 - a 3% total increase over four years. Two subgroups, White and Asian, already exceed the over goal at 90.58 and82.05 at baseline, respectively. Their goals are noted as "continuous progress." Students with disabilities are expected to increase their rate of graduation by 31.4% over four years. The annual goals do not include reasonable expectations for all subgroups and are not ambitious in the aggregate for overall graduation rate over four years.

B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	10

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Fairfax County provides a clear description of their context for closing the achievement gap between higher achievers (White/Asian) and lower achievers (Black/Hispanic). Their approach focuses on the interactions among the content (curriculum), pedagogy (instruction), and relationships within the students' day. Well-conceived strategies are identified for each area such as providing advanced academic programs, expanding full-day kindergarten, and expanding the parent liaison program.

Longitudinal data on the achievement gap for both reading and math for students in grades 4, 6, and 7 demonstrate a significant improvement in the last ten years that has been repeated in math but remained stagnant and even lost a bit of ground in reading. The clear evidence of success for the past four years is confirmed in math, but not in reading.

While the narrative discusses high school graduation rates and college enrollment rates, no data is provided that illustrates a clear record of success over

the past four years.

In the narrative response to demonstrating a clear, four-year record of success in student learning and achievement through its reforms in persistently lowest-achieving schools, the applicant focuses solely on the quality of professional development. This singular lens does not account for other influences that impact the success of these schools, such as parent and community involvement, partnerships, or scheduling allowing for more time for core content instruction.

Survey data is provided to document the support of teachers who participated in professional development. No information is offered as to how many teachers these percentages represent, if the figures represent a time span or only one year of data, and what percentage of all teachers (and all teachers within the participant schools) take advantage of what types of professional development.

Time is provided throughout the district for common planning time for collaborative teams of teachers. Professional Learning Committees (PLCs) were initiated within the schools in 2010 and are in various levels of implementation/

The proposal offers a description of their professional development approach, including its base in research and support among teachers. While the result of excellent professional development is a strong factor in the success of low-achieving schools, its description is not an appropriate response to the criterion that seeks evidence of district success illustrating an ability to achieve ambitious and significant reforms in those persistently low-achieving sites.

Student performance data is available to students, educators and parents through two systems, the eCART (electronic Curriculum Assessment Resource Tool) and EDSL (Education Decision Support Library). The eCART data system provides approved assessments and instructional resources and allows students to take assessments online and receive immediate feedback. Teachers are able to access a library of formative assessment and instructional resources and view years of student information to guide instruction decisions and support instruction. Specific information of what information is available to parents and how they would access that information is not provided, nor is a comprehensive discussion of how student performance data could be used to inform and improve participation and services.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The Fairfax County School District School Board approves an annual budget with revenue fund expenditures by fund, and within the operating fund, detailed revenue and expenditures. Budget books and salary scales are added to the public web site and available to the community. Information includes school-based and non-school based positions by job title, total salaries and benefits, and district salary scales with associated pay rates. Detailed Budget Sheets are provided for each school and are also available on the public website. The Budget Sheets include personnel and non-personnel expenditures with salaries provided for specific individuals at each school. Five years of data are available for each school. The information provided is comprehensive and reflects evidence of transparency in district investments.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal refers to five areas of State authority with the potential to impact the implementation of the project: (1) state statutes and regulations of the Virginia Board of Education that charge the Fairfax County School Board to provide and operate the public schools of Fairfax County, (2) state educational expectations through the Standards of Learning, (c) a district-level approval process for a waiver of the regulation that a standard unit of credit for graduation requires a minimum of 140 clock hours of instruction, (d) a new model for teacher evaluation standards, and (e) the inclusion of an Academic and Career Plan for high school graduation. In each case, the district has met or exceeded expectations. The district's Board of Education has accepted responsibility to set school policy and guide the school program. The majority of the district's curriculum will be written around a more rigorous set of standards (Expected Standards) than the basic state Standards of Learning. Several courses have already been approved for credit that demonstrates an equivalency to the 140 clock hours of instruction. As with the standards, the district has developed a more rigorous and effective teacher evaluation that incorporates collaboration as an expectation in teacher performance. Finally, while the state has postponed the Academic and Career Plan graduation requirement, the district finds it of convincing value and intends to pursue its implementation.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	7

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The district actively engaged parents and teachers in the development stage of the proposal, seeking input following a presentation to the Fairfax County Council of PTAs and sharing information with the Minority Student Achievement Oversight Committee. Both principals and teachers had opportunities to provide input. The narrative does not address how the proposal was revised based on the involvement and input from these constituents, including the requests for customization at the school-level that were made.

The appendix includes a letter signed by all five cluster assistant superintendents stating the support for the work. The letter specifically notes that "… principals and teachers have had discussions about the grant application and letters of assurance are being collected." An additional statement confirms that each of the cluster assistant superintendents listed "verifies teacher and principal support within their cluster schools included in this RTT proposal." These letters are not included in the application; there is no evidence that at least 70% of teachers from participating schools support the proposal.

Letters of support are included from other stakeholders that support the district and the implementation of the project. They include government (State Senate, Chairman, County Board of Supervisors, targeted area supports (Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce and FCPS Education Foundation), the University of Virginia Curry School of Education, and Dr. David Conley, CEO of the Educational Policy Improvement Center (EPIC). Conley refers to critical work to prepare students for college and career. Students and their families are not represented among these stakeholders.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	5

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant illustrates a review of the district's status in implementing personalized learning environments through progress in the four core assurance areas. In each area, needs and gaps are defined, but progress has been made. Challenges are presented within each assurance area that push schools, teachers, and the educational community to expand, enhance, and improve the level of services and performance across the board to meet the goals of the plan.

The logic of these selections stems from the initial realization that the strength of the district was in the delivery of excellent standards-based education rather than on a college- and career-ready environment that added skills education to the K-12 instruction. The implementation of the Creating and Developing 21st Century Innovators proposal will support that logical shift.

C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	16

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The plan submitted by Fairfax County to improve the learning environment for students and prepare them for college and careers revolves around a Personalized Student Learning Plan developed by, for, and with each student. The students are the drivers for their own plans, supported by parents, educators, and other leaders in a coordinated effort to guide them towards and through high school and into success in college and careers. The Student Learning Plans will reflect the district's recognition of the critical nature of specific skills as identified through the development of the Framework for 21st Century Skills.

The Student Learning Plan, rdesigned to display individual student goals and interests, serves as the primary tool to ensure that students understand the importance of their learning. The Plan is initiated at the elementary school level and continued during middle- and high-school years as it is able to work with district data systems and develop draft plans of study for student analysis. This level of sophistication will enable students to understand how to structure their learning and determine clear paths to success to college and job markets.

The narrative does not adequately address how students will have access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts and perspectives. The proposal notes that the grant will enhance diversity and global awareness, but provides no specifics as to how this may occur or evolve and what steps would be taken to increase the likelihood that such interaction would motivate and deepen individual student learning.

Evidence is provided throughout the proposal of the approach that intertwines critical academic content and skills and traits needed for success in college and career. The Student Learning Plan developed by students will incorporate these two aspects of education as will activities within classrooms.

It is unclear from the narrative whether or not there is a strategy to ensure that each student has access to a personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development to move them to on-time graduation and college and career success. Successful sequence options would be expected to be on each student's Student Learning Plan, but no information is provided regarding the actual availability of selected site-bound course work (required or of interest) or if online options would be available to the student. Digital learning content will be made available for students, following the assurance that the content meets Program of Studies criteria, but there is no indication that online classes will be available to students to increase the availability of content.

Students will have access to feedback through the online information systems (eCART and EDSL) which provide information, resources, and tools as well as immediate feedback from assessments. The Student Learning Plan, which includes assessments of key skills, is expected to provide an opportunity for discussion with parents and teachers. The proposal provides only minimal information regarding the accommodations and high-quality strategies for high-need students to ensure that they are on the right track towards being college and career ready. No information is offered to determine if students within the participant schools with a need for significant accommodations will receive them.

Mechanisms are in place for training and support to students.

	Available	Score
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	16

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal from Fairfax County Public Schools provides useful insight that supports the district's efforts to implement a large-scale and scope plan. They recognize that: (1) their traditional professional learning model does not adequately differentiate for teacher needs, (2) additional work is needed to reduce achievement gaps for low-income and minority students, and (3) despite the good intentions of Professional Learning Communities in each school, their inconsistent implementation across schools was impeding student success. These critical observations of current practice and the resultant plan to address them add strength to the proposal.

The narrative refers to individualized professional development for teachers on universal practices for adapting content and instruction. While teachers, as a group, will be involved in Project-Based Learning training, the importance of other learning opportunities for students (e.g., discussion and collaborative work), relegated to individualized professional development may be limiting.

Student progress towards meeting college- and career standards will be measured and monitored within each school by teachers within their Professional Learning Communities. The eCART system, available to the teachers, includes both student performance information and access to resource tools and access to data tracking. Teachers will be able to use this information, along with the provided tools, to personalize learning to enhance college and career readiness.

The proposal does not adequately address the issue of improving teachers' and principals' practice and effectiveness by using feedback from the district's teacher and evaluation systems. .Reference is made to the alignment of common vocabulary with the district's new evaluation process and Best Practices terminology and a district interest in both feedback and recommendations, but there is no tie to evaluations as defined in the notice.

All participating educators are expected to have access to resources to accelerate student progress towards program goals. The proposal narrative lacks details, reiterating the requirement for actionable information to assist educators in identifying optimal learning approaches, and failing to describe, provide any examples, or illustrate the use of any.

The proposal addresses resources to accelerate student progress and high-quality learning resources (examples provided as instructional content and assessments) as professional development for teachers rather than learning resources for students. Blended learning environments and digital resources and tools, as well as the Online Campus, are offered for teachers. The narrative provides further evidence of this focus with a description of a six-credit master's level course in partnership with George Mason University that is available at no cost to teachers and administrators. The proposal does not include information on educators' access to resources that provide high-quality learning resources, including digital resources that are aligned with college- and career-ready standards for students.

The applicant does not clearly address the need for educators to have access to processes and tools to match student needs with specific resources and approaches to provide continuously improving feedback. The narrative notes that reform would assist in goal alignment and that teachers would be able to modify their practice based on learner needs, but this is neither a comprehensive nor a complete response to the criterion.

The proposal does not provide any sources of information, including the district's teacher evaluation system or any reform of school personnel, that might help school leaders and school leadership teams assess and improve school culture and climate.

The district reform will revise practices to expand the capacity of all school leaders to both collaborate with families and mobilize community resources. Additional details on how this would occur are not offered.

The proposal notes that the district reform will increase the number of students receiving instruction from highly effective educators due to the availability of high-quality professional development. The narrative is sparse, offering no elaboration. No details are provided concerning highly effective teachers and principals for hard-to-staff schools, in certain subject areas, or in specialty areas such as Special Education.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	**15**	**10**

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

In its goal to provide support and services to schools, the district will strengthen the already service-oriented central office with an Open Community Action Gateway that is intended to: (1) automatically populate select modules with relevant information to be used as a resource and for decision making and, (2) re-design the user-interface to make it more user-friendly. No further need to change or re-organize the central office was addressed.

Leadership teams at participant schools work within district practices, policies and rules that limit them to arranging schedules, not calendars, determining staffing models and determining the distribution of support teachers within the school. The narrative does not address the schools' autonomy over their school budget.

Fairfax County offers students the opportunity to earn credits based on demonstrated mastery and to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparative ways. An example is provided for credit earned: a division-wide examination in World Language. It is less clear how multiple assessments for the same standard would ensure high quality and consistency.

While the proposal addresses the criterion regarding learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to all students, no specific practices, policies, or rules to facilitate personalized learning are provided. The narrative notes that this is a priority, falls under the purview of the Department of Special Services, and that personalized learning will assist these students in becoming college and career ready.

	Available	Score
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	**10**	**8**

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Participant students, parents, educators, and other stakeholders have access to currently available resource tools; the intent of the proposal is to enable the interoperability of these tools to increase equity of access and access to information. The resource tools include the district's FCPS 24-7 Learning, the online resource available to students, parents, and teachers to access homework, classroom assignments, communications, and district-generated information; EDSL, a decision-support system for school administrators; and eCART, developed by the district to facilitate instruction and learning with a focus on professional development for teachers.

Students and families without home access are eligible to participate in a Student Computer Loaner Program, use computers in supervised areas at some schools before or after school. The district recently developed a "Bring Your Own Device" program allowing students to register and use personally-owned laptops, netbooks, tablets, and smartphones in school for authorized instructional use. No information is provided on the social implications this might cause for students on the other side of the digital divide.

The applicant provides sufficient and convincing details to demonstrate that students, parents, and educators have appropriate levels of technical support. Professional development opportunities are available to teachers, including the assistance from Technology Support Specialists. Students and parents have access to telephone and online support through the FCPS 24-7 Learning help desk; online how-to-videos; quick-reference guides; as well as, for students, after-school information sessions.

In Phase 2 of the implementation, the expectation is that students will be able to export their information into a personal learning profile that can be referenced for the remainder of their learning career. No other applications for transporting this data are discussed, including those for electronic tutors or other software.

The school district and the participant schools use interoperable data systems including student information data.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	**15**	**3**

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Fairfax presents a continuous improvement process that moves from project development through sustainable implementation. It does not include a full feedback loop for continuous improvement throughout and beyond the term of the funding. The strategy for implementing the process does not address how the applicant will monitor, measure, and publicly share information on the quality of the Race to the Top-District investment, including technology or staff. No information is provided that details the process for a continuous review for improvement of the professional development.

	Available	Score
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	**5**	**4**

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Information on major projects within the district is circulated via numerous means, including electronic newsletters and press releases, keeping communications open with the community and other stakeholders. Project team meetings, that can include teleconferencing, can be shared on the website. The proposal identifies several examples of strategies for ongoing communications. The response does not identify key stakeholders, such as parents, or suggest the use of e-mail or listservs.

	Available	Score
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	**5**	**3**

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The application includes performance measures for all levels of students: PreK-3, 4-8, and 9-12. Additional baseline data was provided for increased historical perspective.

Performance measures were not included for those addressing the number and percentage of effective- and highly-effective teachers and principals. The narrative indicates that data is included in the proposal. It is unclear, however, whether the applicant's definition of the terms effective and highly-effective are consistent with the definitions provided in the notice (how well standards have been met versus student growth in one year).

Only one performance measure was included for PreK-3. Due to amount of data added, the print size on the charts is, in some cases, too small to read.

The performance measures on the Youth Survey Data include no annual targets. The narrative does not address how the measure will be reviewed over time.

The performance measure for high school students completing and submitting the FAFSA does not reveal an ambitious goal for any year or over the course of the grant. For South Lake High School, the annual expectation is either 1% growth every other year. These figures represent achievable, but not ambitious, goals.

The selection of industry certification as a performance measure for college and career readiness at the high school level fails to generate any of the data necessary.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	4

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The proposal provides an evaluation strategy that encompasses all three plan components: the Personalized Student Learning Plan, the Customized Professional Development Model, and the Open Community Action Plan. The evaluation of the Student Learning Plan will offer both qualitative and quantitative data and identify similar non-participant schools to serve as control schools for comparative purposes. Details are provided covering the areas for analysis.

The professional development model will monitor the number and percentage of effective- and highly-effective teachers within the participant schools over the grant cycle, recognizing that a new teacher evaluation system is expected that may have an impact on these figures.

The Open Community Action Plan will measure stakeholder engagement and use, tracking access of eCART by school, grade level, subject, and teacher. Much of this evaluation is expected in the second half of the grant period.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	9

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The application includes a summary budget and budgets for each individual project, with all funds documented. Costs are reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the proposal. Explanations are provided within each project narrative and include the purpose of the expenditure. Appropriate details are included within the narratives.

No information was provided on one-time investments versus those used for ongoing operational costs.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	4

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The plan for sustainability following the four years of grant support include savings from decreased costs of training delivery (thus substitutes), improvements in market innovations, and student success leading to increased efficiencies in the use of resources. The plan does not include any support from State or local government leaders. No indication is given as to how the district and the schools will approach the end of funding for extended contracts for 400 teachers and an overall budget that is 63% personnel costs.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	2

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

Fairfax County School District proposes to develop partnerships with the Community Services Board from the Fairfax County Government, the American Federation of Suicide Prevention, parent organizations, and other agencies and organizations to address students' social, emotional and behavioral wellness. Towards that end, a census survey will be developed and administered to all students in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12 to look at risk factors and healthy behaviors.

Little data is provided that supports a significant problem in this area for students. The narratives notes that youth in the district report rates of experiencing depressive symptoms above that of their same-age peers nationally, but no details are offered on this measure or if it is anecdotal in nature. Similarly, no details are provided on the discipline data that identified a need for more collaborative work.

The narrative identifies five desired results for grade 6 and grade 12 students that are consistent with (and included in) the proposal. These population-level desired results are skill-based only and do not include the requisite educational outcomes.

The description of the partnership and the district does not include information on building the capacity of staff in the participating schools. This would include engaging parents and families in decision making, and identifying needs and assets of the school.

The performance measures included for the competitive preference include no annual targets.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	**Met/Not Met**	**Met**

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

      Fairfax County School District's Creating and Developing 21st Century Innovators proposal provides a comprehensive approach to creating personalized learning environments for students, building on the core assurance areas throughout and maintaining the goals of increasing student achievement, deepening student learning, increasing teacher effectiveness through professional development opportunities, and continuing to decrease the achievement gap across student groups. The district has been successful in many of these areas but recognizes continued challenges. The plan for students is individual progress marked by high school graduation and success with both college and career.

Total	210	152